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Irvine Ranch
WATER DISTRICT



Q: Are IRWD offices still closed to customers? Any tips for quick service?

A: Yes. For safety, our offices remain closed during the COVID-19 pandemic. But we're still here to help. First, check out IRWD.com. Chances are you can get what you need done there. You also can email CustomerService@IRWD.com. We're here in person 8 a.m.–5 p.m., Monday–Thursday. You can call us at **949-453-5300**, but we're busiest on Mondays, so it's best to call Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday.

Remember to check out our Coronavirus Resource Page at IRWD.com/services. You'll find updates and links to 24/7 service. And if the coronavirus has made it hard for you to pay your bill, please call us. Thank you and take care.

Got a question for this new feature? Email info@IRWD.com with "Ask Customer Service" as the subject line.

How IRWD Quenches Its Thirst for Energy



Aerial view of solar power modules being installed at the Baker Water Treatment Plant.

Water and energy are fundamentally linked: Energy is needed to pump, treat and distribute water, and water is used to generate many forms of energy. In an age when both resources are increasingly scarce, Irvine Ranch Water District is finding ways to supplement the energy needed for its operations.

As part of that vision, IRWD has installed 2,360 solar power modules on top of two underground water storage reservoirs at the Baker Water Treatment Plant in Lake Forest. These panels will generate about 1MW of power—enough to serve about 50% of the plant's energy needs. The Baker solar project is an important part of IRWD's Energy and Greenhouse Master Plan, which outlines goals to use less energy and incorporate sustainability into its operations.

IRWD has several additional projects completed or nearing completion to help

meet this need—and save money—through renewable energy and energy storage:

- A 100 kilowatt solar power array at the district's Sand Canyon Avenue headquarters, which provides 20% of the building's energy.
- A 250 kilowatt system at the district's Zone 3 reservoir.
- The Energy Storage Project, a 7MW network of high-efficiency lithium batteries that store energy and provide on-site power to our operations at six locations.
- The Biosolids and Energy Recovery Facility, which converts organic solids left over from the treatment of sewage into pellets that can be used as fertilizer or fuel. Biogas from the process is harnessed to generate energy for the plant.

Learn more at IRWD.com/doing-business/energy-saving-programs.

Hot Out? Here's How Much to Water

Keep plants healthy. Follow sprinkler and drip irrigation schedules at WateringGuide.com.

Save the Date

Fall Into Gardening

Online Webinar
Wednesday, Sept. 16
Noon – 1 p.m.

Prepare for planting season. Learn about rainwater harvesting, creating a plant list, inspecting your sprinkler system, and landscape care. Transition from fall to winter, garden-style!

Sign-up required:
RightScapeNow.com/events

Succulent Garden Grows Up

Germinated from a customer idea, IRWD's succulent demonstration garden has flourished since it was planted last year. It's a medley of water-efficient succulents, including coral aloe, emerald empress, and royal ruby. So drive by and get inspired at 15600 Sand Canyon Ave., Irvine. (Our offices are temporarily closed, but the garden is still exhilarating.)



At one year old, garden is an explosion of colors.

To create a water-thrifty garden at home:

- Explore IRWD's gardens at RightScapeNow.com/demo-garden.
- Visit RightScapeResources.com/search.php to discover the shapes, sizes, and colors of succulents you can plant.
- If you replace all or part of your lawn with succulents, you might be eligible for a turf removal rebate. Learn more at RightScapeNow.com/rebates.

Ask Juan



Q: I see a lot of suggestions for planting water-friendly or native plants, but they do not mention fragrance. Can you list some water-friendly/native plants that are fragrant?

A: Funny you say that—I had another customer reach out regarding the same thing. Here are some aromatic delights to consider:

- Cleveland sage (*Salvia clevelandii*) produces showy lavender flowers that attract hummingbirds and bees. But it's the leaves that produce an intense fragrance.

- Mock orange (*Philadelphus lewisii*) blooms have a lilac shape and a wonderfully sweet smell.
- Woolly blue curls (*Trichostema lanatum*) gives off a sage-like aroma.

See these and much more at RightScapeResources.com, or check out calscape.org or ucanr.edu. Then enjoy transforming your garden into a staggered palette of aromas.

Got landscape questions? Email AskJuan@IRWD.com or ask on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram with [#irwdcommunity](https://www.instagram.com/irwdcommunity). See past answers at RightScapeNow.com/landscape-resources/ask-juan.

California Native Corner

Juan's August Plant: Chaparral Currant

Chaparral Currant (*Ribes malvaceum*) is a deciduous shrub native to California and is part of the gooseberry family. It can grow 8 feet tall and attracts butterflies, moths, caterpillars, birds and bees. Chaparral current is known for its fragrant foliage, which releases a beautiful aroma. Its clusters of pink flowers bloom as early as fall and into spring. Then, it develops red to purple edible berries. It requires very little water once established, but will look better with a little mulch and water in the spring. — Juan



Looking for garden inspiration? Find it in **The Dirt**, IRWD's new newsletter dedicated to promoting beautiful and efficient landscapes in our climate. This quarterly publication provides tips, resources, ideas — and a plant and color palette to bring your yard to life. IRWD's experts will help you create an echanting outdoor retreat and save water, too.



To read the latest issue and sign up to receive future copies each season, visit RightScapeNow.com/The-Dirt.

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